



Portsmouth
High School

GDST
GIRLS' DAY SCHOOL TRUST

Risk Assessment Policy

Pre-School, Prep, Senior and Sixth Form

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Part of the Girls' Day School Trust family of schools



Risk Assessment Policy

This policy applies to the whole school: Senior, Junior and EYFS

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This policy reflects the commitment to Health & Safety by Portsmouth High School. All reasonably practicable steps will be taken to secure the health, safety & welfare of everyone legally on school premises and those attending school activities off-site.

Portsmouth High School adheres to the GDST Risk Assessment Policy

Risk Assessment Policy Statement

The GDST recognises that Risk Assessment is one of the keystones of good health and safety management; it can make a significant contribution to promoting welfare and reducing health and safety risks to employees, pupils, visitors and others who may be affected by the way in which the school operates

All GDST schools, academies and Trust Office must complete comprehensive risk assessments for all potentially hazardous activities, environments and situations using the 'five steps to risk assessment' approach' (described in detail in the following guidance), regularly review them, and implement the controls necessary to reduce the risks to an acceptable level following the principles of prevention: eliminate the hazard at source, reduce the hazard, prevent contact with the hazard, implement safe systems of work, employ personal protective equipment.

All GDST schools, academies and Trust Office will provide training and comprehensive guidance to employees on how to complete risk assessments. It is important that staff know how to identify risks and the importance of implementing reasonably practicable controls, so that risks are managed at an acceptable level.

What is a Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a systematic method of looking at the school environment and activities to identify things that could happen or go wrong and cause injury or ill health, and deciding on the actions needed to prevent this. If it is not possible to remove all the risks, they should be reduced or minimised to an acceptable level. It helps to protect:

- pupils, employees, visitors, contractors and members of the public,
- the school and its reputation,
- the GDST and its reputation.

Schools are complex places and a significant number of risks exist. These can be broken down into seven groups:

- The site
- Curricular and pupil activities
- Employee activities
- Foreseeable emergencies
- Equipment chemicals and substances
- People who need extra care

- Events

Completion and Review of Risk Assessments

Heads of Department (HoD) and Heads of Faculty (HoF) are responsible for ensuring the risk assessments for all the areas, activities and people that they are responsible for are completed and regularly reviewed. They are also responsible for ensuring that all staff working in their area are aware of the risk assessments applicable to that area. Any person who has had risk assessment training and is knowledgeable about the relevant hazards, risks and controls are authorised to complete risk assessments.

It is good practice for all the relevant staff in the department to be involved with completing and reviewing the risk assessments as they will have useful information about how the tasks or activities happen in practice, what can (and sometimes does) go wrong, and they are the people who will implement the controls – so they need to know what they are!

All risk assessments are to be stored on the central drive so that they are accessible to all personnel. The only exception to this are Risk Assessments for school trips which are stored on the Evolve database.

Guiding Principles

All activities with any potential hazard must have a risk assessment conducted which details the likelihood of the hazard occurring, the applicable risk caused by the hazard, the possible severity of the hazard, the likelihood of the risk occurring and the actions that are in place to minimise the hazard. This includes activities conducted on and outside school premises.

Consideration should first be given as to whether the activity needs to actually take place. If it does then consideration should be given as to whether it can be completed in a different manner which would eliminate all risk. The risk assessment should be completed on the standard risk template. An example is at the end of this document and a template if available on the H&S drive. The document must include:

- Name of risk assessment,
- Date of completion / last review,
- Name of person who completed / last reviewed RA
- Date RA is next due for updating,

The GDST has adopted the 'five steps to risk assessment' approach which is:

- Step 1: Identify hazards, i.e. anything that may cause harm.**
- Step 2: Decide who may be harmed, and how.**
- Step 3: Assess the risks and take action.**
- Step 4: Make a record of the findings.**
- Step 5: Review the risk assessment.**

Review and Monitoring

Risk assessments need to be **reviewed** regularly (normally annually) to ensure they are complete and up to date.

They must also be reviewed and updated if an incident or near miss occurs or there is a change in the circumstances, ie:

- New or changed activities or changes in best practice

- New or altered equipment
- New or altered environment
- People involved who are unfamiliar with the activity
- An incident occurs that casts doubt on whether the risk is adequately controlled
- Changes in legislation

Monitoring: HODs/HOFs are to continually monitor their working environments and ensure that the risk assessments are adequate and if required, conduct a review of the assessment outside of the routine scheduled period. The school H&S committee reviews accidents/near misses at the termly meetings and will consider whether any identifiable trends have flagged up the requirement for a specific review.

Key Risk Assessment Areas

The following have been identified as key risk assessment areas:

- Pupil supervision
- School trips **Note: school trip risk assessments are completed for all trips on the Evolve trip management package.**
- Fire and emergencies
- Management of hazardous substances
- Use of hazardous equipment (eg: in Art)
- Suitability of staff to undertake designated roles and the completion of the required suitability checks.

Note: The above list is not comprehensive and can be added to at any time.

Training

The annual H&S training delivered by the DFO is to include an explanation of the risk assessment process used by the school.

Further training for those who need to complete risk assessments is available on the GDST e-learning system. For access to this system or if they feel that they need further training, staff should contact the DFO.

Information is also available on The HSE Website via the following link: [HSE website](#).

Full guidance and templates are available on the GDST Hub under Health and Safety Department Policies – H&S Risk Assessment General Guidance.

Nigel McMahon
Director of Finance & Operations

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Date of next review: 01/07/2027